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Subject: [WQ News] More data shows groundwater pollution from fracking
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Summit County Citizens Voice

More data shows groundwater pollution from fracking

Posted on October 9, 2012 by Bob Berwyn

Water sampling in Pavilion, Wyoming, Jan. 2010. Photo courtesy EPA.

USGS sampling in Wyoming appears to support earlier EPA results

By Summit Voice

SUMMIT COUNTY — There's more evidence suggesting that fracking in Wyoming is polluting groundwater near the town of Pavilion, as U.S. Geological Survey water quality sampling appears to show similar results as an earlier EPA study.

The 2011 EPA sampling was one of the first to document hydrocarbons consistent with fracking fluid chemicals in drinking water wells and monitoring wells located near natural gas wells.

The latest USGS study was conducted specifically to check EPA's results, even as the the oil and gas industry continue to question the results. Environmental advocates accuse the industry of protecting their economic interests at the expense of public health and safety.

To try and interpret the raw sampling data, the Sierra Club, Earthworks, and the Natural Resources Defense Council worked with a hydrologist and independent expert. Dr. Tom Myers found that the USGS data support EPA's initial findings.

"Dr. Myers' analysis shows that the USGS upholds EPA's preliminary conclusion that hydraulic fracturing contaminated Pavillion-area groundwater," said Bruce Baizel, Earthworks' Oil & Gas Accountability Project senior staff attorney. "It's long past time for states and industry to stop denying oil and gas development's environmental problems, and start working on fixing them."

The USGS report found that thermogenic gas, which very likely comes from fracked deep shale formations, continues to increase in a monitoring well. This evidence strongly suggests that as a result of fracking, gas is seeping into Pavillion's water.

A range of chemicals associated with the fracking process also continue to appear in the monitoring well, showing that hazardous pollution is spreading towards the surface. This new information supports EPA's

hypothesis that natural gas drilling activities, including fracking, have contaminated the Wind River aquifer near Pavillion.

"The Sierra Club is concerned by the U.S. Geological Survey's important conclusions, which further underline EPA's report that fracking has contaminated Pavillion's water," said Deb Nardone, Sierra Club Beyond Natural Gas campaign director. "This report raises the alarm on the public health threats posed by dirty and dangerous fracking and the need to rein in a oil and gas industry that remains unchecked and unaccountable for their toxic pollution."

"This reinforces EPA's findings – and the concerns of Americans in communities across the country – that dangerous fracking practices are putting our drinking water and health at risk," said NRDC senior policy analyst Amy Mall. "That's why it's critical that EPA thoroughly investigate reports of fracking water contamination concerns. It's essential that we protect Americans from a repeat of what we are seeing in Wyoming."

Read Dr. Myers' analysis [here](#).

View the U.S. Geological Survey's data [here](#).

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